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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR, AF, PM, IO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/12/2019

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SUBJECT: CYPRIOTS REQUEST PARTICIPATION IN SOMALI PIRACY
CONTACT GROUP

REF: COHEN-NETOS-BAILY EMAIL OF 01/13/09

Classified By: DCM Jonathan Cohen, Reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (U) This message contains an action request -- please see Paragraph 4.

¶2. (C) MFA Political Director Rhea Yiordamlis on January 13 called in the DCM to convey an urgent request for Cypriot participation in the January 14 inaugural meeting of the Contact Group on Somali Piracy (CGSP). Yiordamlis said the GOC was concerned that, given Turkey's membership in the CGSP and its history of blocking Cypriot participation in international fora requiring existing member states' consensus to expand, Ankara would block Cypriot participation unless Cyprus participated from the outset.

¶3. (C) Yiordamlis presented a list of reasons in support of Cypriot participation in the CGSP, including Cyprus's large merchant fleet (the third largest in the EU and the tenth largest in the world), Cyprus's constructive participation in the EU's first naval mission, the considerable number of Cypriot-flagged vessels in the region, and Cyprus's status as the first EU member to conclude a shipboarding agreement with the United States under the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Yiordamlis also commented that Cyprus had the capability to contribute and a helpful track record -- perhaps more obvious interests and capabilities than some of the other 22 states she said were on the participant list for the January 14 meeting.

¶4. (C) While not possessing definitive information on the participant selection process for the CGSP, we believe the Cypriots present a good case for their involvement in the initiative. ACTION REQUEST: Please provide guidance soonest in response to the GOC request to participate in the January 14 CGSP meeting.
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